

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

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From the INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

PCT

To:

VOITH FABRICS PATENT GMBH
St. Poeltenerstrasse 43
89522 Heidenheim
GERMANY

EINGEGANGEN
Patentabteilung

21. Okt. 2005

Erl.

NOTIFICATION OF TRANSMITTAL OF
THE INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT AND
THE WRITTEN OPINION OF THE INTERNATIONAL
SEARCHING AUTHORITY, OR THE DECLARATION

(PCT Rule 44.1)

Date of mailing
(day/month/year)

20. 10. 2005

Applicant's or agent's file reference

PT11787 WO

FOR FURTHER ACTION

See paragraphs 1 and 4 below

International application No.

PCT/EP2004/053688

International filing date

(day/month/year)

23/12/2004

Applicant

VOITH FABRICS PATENT GMBH

1. ☒ The applicant is hereby notified that the international search report and the written opinion of the International Searching Authority have been established and are transmitted herewith.

Filing of amendments and statement under Article 19:

The applicant is entitled, if he so wishes, to amend the claims of the International Application (see Rule 46):

When? The time limit for filing such amendments is normally 2 months from the date of transmittal of the International Search Report; however, for more details, see the notes on the accompanying sheet.

Where? Directly to the International Bureau of WIPO, 34 chemin des Colombettes
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland, Facsimile No.: (41-22) 740.14.35

For more detailed instructions, see the notes on the accompanying sheet.

2. ☐ The applicant is hereby notified that no international search report will be established and that the declaration under Article 17(2)(a) to that effect and the written opinion of the International Searching Authority are transmitted herewith.
3. ☐ **With regard to the protest** against payment of (an) additional fee(s) under Rule 40.2, the applicant is notified that:

- ☐ the protest together with the decision thereon has been transmitted to the International Bureau together with the applicant's request to forward the texts of both the protest and the decision thereon to the designated Offices.
- ☐ no decision has been made yet on the protest; the applicant will be notified as soon as a decision is made.

4. Reminders

Shortly after the expiration of **18 months** from the priority date, the international application will be published by the International Bureau. If the applicant wishes to avoid or postpone publication, a notice of withdrawal of the international application, or of the priority claim, must reach the International Bureau as provided in Rules 90bis.1 and 90bis.3, respectively, before the completion of the technical preparations for international publication.

The applicant may submit comments on an informal basis on the written opinion of the International Searching Authority to the International Bureau. The international Bureau will send a copy of such comments to all designated Offices unless an international preliminary examination report has been or is to be established. These comments would also be made available to the public but not before the expiration of 30 months from the priority date.

Within **19 months** from the priority date, but only in respect of some designated Offices, a demand for international preliminary examination must be filed if the applicant wishes to postpone the entry into the national phase until **30 months** from the priority date (in some Offices even later); otherwise, the applicant must, **within 20 months** from the priority date, perform the prescribed acts for entry into the national phase before those designated Offices.

In respect of other designated Offices, the time limit of **30 months** (or later) will apply even if no demand is filed within 19 months.

See the Annex to Form PCT/IB/301 and, for details about the applicable time limits, Office by Office, see the *PCT Applicant's Guide*, Volume II, National Chapters and the WIPO Internet site.

Name and mailing address of the International Searching Authority



European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2
NL-2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl,
Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Malene Strarup

NOTES TO FORM PCT/ISA/220

These Notes are intended to give the basic instructions concerning the filing of amendments under article 19. The Notes are based on the requirements of the Patent Cooperation Treaty, the Regulations and the Administrative Instructions under that Treaty. In case of discrepancy between these Notes and those requirements, the latter are applicable. For more detailed information, see also the PCT Applicant's Guide, a publication of WIPO.

In these Notes, "Article", "Rule", and "Section" refer to the provisions of the PCT, the PCT Regulations and the PCT Administrative Instructions respectively.

INSTRUCTIONS CONCERNING AMENDMENTS UNDER ARTICLE 19

The applicant has, after having received the international search report, one opportunity to amend the claims of the international application. It should however be emphasized that, since all parts of the international application (claims, description and drawings) may be amended during the international preliminary examination procedure, there is usually no need to file amendments of the claims under Article 19 except where, e.g. the applicant wants the latter to be published for the purposes of provisional protection or has another reason for amending the claims before international publication. Furthermore, it should be emphasized that provisional protection is available in some States only.

What parts of the International application may be amended?

Under Article 19, only the claims may be amended.

During the international phase, the claims may also be amended (or further amended) under Article 34 before the International Preliminary Examining Authority. The description and drawings may only be amended under Article 34 before the International Examining Authority.

Upon entry into the national phase, all parts of the international application may be amended under Article 28 or, where applicable, Article 41.

When?

Within 2 months from the date of transmittal of the international search report or 16 months from the priority date, whichever time limit expires later. It should be noted, however, that the amendments will be considered as having been received on time if they are received by the International Bureau after the expiration of the applicable time limit but before the completion of the technical preparations for international publication (Rule 46.1).

Where not to file the amendments?

The amendments may only be filed with the International Bureau and not with the receiving Office or the International Searching Authority (Rule 46.2).

Where a demand for international preliminary examination has been/is filed, see below.

How?

Either by cancelling one or more entire claims, by adding one or more new claims or by amending the text of one or more of the claims as filed.

A replacement sheet must be submitted for each sheet of the claims which, on account of an amendment or amendments, differs from the sheet originally filed.

All the claims appearing on a replacement sheet must be numbered in Arabic numerals. Where a claim is cancelled, no renumbering of the other claims is required. In all cases where claims are renumbered, they must be renumbered consecutively (Administrative Instructions, Section 205(b)).

The amendments must be made in the language in which the international application is to be published.

What documents must/may accompany the amendments?

Letter (Section 205(b)):

The amendments must be submitted with a letter.

The letter will not be published with the international application and the amended claims. It should not be confused with the "Statement under Article 19(1)" (see below, under "Statement under Article 19(1)").

The letter must be in English or French, at the choice of the applicant. However, if the language of the international application is English, the letter must be in English; if the language of the international application is French, the letter must be in French.

NOTES TO FORM PCT/ISA/220 (continued)

The letter must indicate the differences between the claims as filed and the claims as amended. It must, in particular, indicate, in connection with each claim appearing in the international application (it being understood that identical indications concerning several claims may be grouped), whether

- (i) the claim is unchanged;
- (ii) the claim is cancelled;
- (iii) the claim is new;
- (iv) the claim replaces one or more claims as filed;
- (v) the claim is the result of the division of a claim as filed.

The following examples illustrate the manner in which amendments must be explained in the accompanying letter:

1. [Where originally there were 48 claims and after amendment of some claims there are 51]:
"Claims 1 to 29, 31, 32, 34, 35, 37 to 48 replaced by amended claims bearing the same numbers; claims 30, 33 and 36 unchanged; new claims 49 to 51 added."
2. [Where originally there were 15 claims and after amendment of all claims there are 11]:
"Claims 1 to 15 replaced by amended claims 1 to 11."
3. [Where originally there were 14 claims and the amendments consist in cancelling some claims and in adding new claims]:
"Claims 1 to 6 and 14 unchanged; claims 7 to 13 cancelled; new claims 15, 16 and 17 added." or
"Claims 7 to 13 cancelled; new claims 15, 16 and 17 added; all other claims unchanged."
4. [Where various kinds of amendments are made]:
"Claims 1-10 unchanged; claims 11 to 13, 18 and 19 cancelled; claims 14, 15 and 16 replaced by amended claim 14; claim 17 subdivided into amended claims 15, 16 and 17; new claims 20 and 21 added."

"Statement under article 19(1)" (Rule 46.4)

The amendments may be accompanied by a statement explaining the amendments and indicating any impact that such amendments might have on the description and the drawings (which cannot be amended under Article 19(1)).

The statement will be published with the international application and the amended claims.
It must be in the language in which the international application is to be published.

It must be brief, not exceeding 500 words if in English or if translated into English.

It should not be confused with and does not replace the letter indicating the differences between the claims as filed and as amended. It must be filed on a separate sheet and must be identified as such by a heading, preferably by using the words "Statement under Article 19(1)."

It may not contain any disparaging comments on the international search report or the relevance of citations contained in that report. Reference to citations, relevant to a given claim, contained in the international search report may be made only in connection with an amendment of that claim.

Consequence if a demand for international preliminary examination has already been filed

If, at the time of filing any amendments under Article 19, a demand for international preliminary examination has already been submitted, the applicant must preferably, at the same time of filing the amendments with the International Bureau, also file a copy of such amendments with the International Preliminary Examining Authority (see Rule 62.2(a), first sentence).

Consequence with regard to translation of the international application for entry into the national phase

The applicant's attention is drawn to the fact that, where upon entry into the national phase, a translation of the claims as amended under Article 19 may have to be furnished to the designated/elected Offices, instead of, or in addition to, the translation of the claims as filed.

For further details on the requirements of each designated/elected Office, see Volume II of the PCT Applicant's Guide.

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

(PCT Article 18 and Rules 43 and 44)

Applicant's or agent's file reference PT11787 WO	FOR FURTHER ACTION see Form PCT/ISA/220 as well as, where applicable, item 5 below.	
International application No. PCT/EP2004/053688	International filing date (day/month/year) 23/12/2004	(Earliest) Priority Date (day/month/year) 30/01/2004
Applicant VOITH FABRICS PATENT GMBH		

This International Search Report has been prepared by this International Searching Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 18. A copy is being transmitted to the International Bureau.

This International Search Report consists of a total of 7 sheets.

☒ It is also accompanied by a copy of each prior art document cited in this report.

1. Basis of the report

- a. With regard to the **language**, the international search was carried out on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

☐ The international search was carried out on the basis of a translation of the international application furnished to this Authority (Rule 23.1(b)).

- b. ☐ With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application, see Box No. I.

2. ☐ **Certain claims were found unsearchable** (See Box II).

3. ☒ **Unity of invention is lacking** (see Box III).

4. With regard to the title,

☒ the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.

☐ the text has been established by this Authority to read as follows:

5. With regard to the abstract,

☐ the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.

☒ the text has been established, according to Rule 38.2(b), by this Authority as it appears in Box No. IV. The applicant may, within one month from the date of mailing of this international search report, submit comments to this Authority.

6. With regard to the drawings,

- a. the figure of the **drawings** to be published with the abstract is Figure No. 1

☐ as suggested by the applicant.

☒ as selected by this Authority, because the applicant failed to suggest a figure.

☐ as selected by this Authority, because this figure better characterizes the invention.

- b. ☐ none of the figures is to be published with the abstract.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/EP2004/053688

Box No. IV Text of the abstract (Continuation of item 5 of the first sheet)

A permeable belt (34), a belt press (22) including a roll (18) having an exterior surface and the permeable belt, and a method of drying or pressing a web (12) with the permeable belt. The permeable belt can be tensioned to at least 30 KN/m. A side of the permeable belt has an open area of at least approximately 25% and a contact area of at least approximately 10% of at least 25%.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/EP2004/053688

Box II Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This International Search Report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
2. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the International Application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful International Search can be carried out, specifically:
3. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box III Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 3 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

see additional sheet

1. ☒ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers all searchable claims.
2. ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
3. ☐ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
4. ☐ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this International Search Report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

Remark on Protest

- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.
- ☒ No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/ISA/ 210

This International Searching Authority found multiple (groups of) inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. claims: 1-84,130-144

Pressing arrangements and methods employing a permeable belt having a tension of at least approximately 30 kN/m, a first side having an open area of at least approximately 25 % and a contact area of at least approximately 10 %.

2. claims: 85-129,145-153

A pressing arrangement and pressing methods wherein air is moved through a paper web disposed between two fabrics.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/EP2004/053688

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC 7 D21F3/02

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHEDMinimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
IPC 7 D21F

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

EPO-Internal, WPI Data, PAJ

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category °	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X A	DE 199 46 979 A1 (VOITH PAPER PATENT GMBH) 5 April 2001 (2001-04-05) the whole document	85,88, 97,99, 113,115, 123,129, 145 1,33,34, 58,71, 81,130
X	DE 37 28 124 A1 (SULZER-ESCHER WYSS GMBH; SULZER-ESCHER WYSS GMBH, 7980 RAVENSBURG, DE) 2 March 1989 (1989-03-02) the whole document	85, 97-99, 109,110, 113, 115-117, 123-125, 129,145

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

° Special categories of cited documents :

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
"E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date
"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.
"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

22 September 2005

Date of mailing of the international search report

20. 10. 2005

Name and mailing address of the ISA

European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl,
Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Helpiö, T.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No
PCT/EP2004/053688

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category °	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
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X	US 2003/056925 A1 (BECK DAVID A) 27 March 2003 (2003-03-27) the whole document	85,95, 99,110, 123,129, 145
A	----- DE 198 45 954 A1 (VOITH SULZER PAPIERTECHNIK PATENT GMBH) 13 April 2000 (2000-04-13) the whole document	1,33,34, 58,71, 81,130
A	----- WO 03/062528 A (VOITH PAPER PATENT GMBH; HERMAN, JEFFREY; BECK, DAVID, A; SCHERB, THOM) 31 July 2003 (2003-07-31) cited in the application the whole document	1,33,34, 58,71, 81,130
A	----- US 6 514 382 B1 (KAKIUCHI SHUSUKE ET AL) 4 February 2003 (2003-02-04) the whole document -----	85,129, 145

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/EP2004/053688

Patent document cited in search report		Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
DE 19946979	A1	05-04-2001	NONE	
DE 3728124	A1	02-03-1989	EP 0304561 A1	01-03-1989
US 2003056925	A1	27-03-2003	BR 0212795 A	14-12-2004
			CA 2461918 A1	10-04-2003
			WO 03029558 A1	10-04-2003
			EP 1432870 A1	30-06-2004
			JP 2005504193 T	10-02-2005
			US 2004180596 A1	16-09-2004
DE 19845954	A1	13-04-2000	NONE	
WO 03062528	A	31-07-2003	BR 0302842 A	02-03-2004
			CA 2474489 A1	31-07-2003
			EP 1478804 A1	24-11-2004
			JP 2005516123 T	02-06-2005
			US 2003136018 A1	24-07-2003
			US 2005126031 A1	16-06-2005
US 6514382	B1	04-02-2003	EP 1201796 A1	02-05-2002
			WO 0111125 A1	15-02-2001

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

PCT

To:

see form PCT/ISA/220

WRITTEN OPINION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY (PCT Rule 43bis.1)

Date of mailing
(day/month/year) see form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet)

Applicant's or agent's file reference
see form PCT/ISA/220

FOR FURTHER ACTION
See paragraph 2 below

International application No.
PCT/EP2004/053688

International filing date (day/month/year)
23.12.2004

Priority date (day/month/year)
30.01.2004

International Patent Classification (IPC) or both national classification and IPC
D21F3/02

Applicant
VOITH FABRICS PATENT GMBH

1. This opinion contains indications relating to the following items:

- ☒ Box No. I Basis of the opinion
- ☒ Box No. II Priority
- ☐ Box No. III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- ☒ Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention
- ☒ Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- ☐ Box No. VI Certain documents cited
- ☒ Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application
- ☒ Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

2. FURTHER ACTION

If a demand for international preliminary examination is made, this opinion will usually be considered to be a written opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority ("IPEA"). However, this does not apply where the applicant chooses an Authority other than this one to be the IPEA and the chosen IPEA has notified the International Bureau under Rule 66.1bis(b) that written opinions of this International Searching Authority will not be so considered.

If this opinion is, as provided above, considered to be a written opinion of the IPEA, the applicant is invited to submit to the IPEA a written reply together, where appropriate, with amendments, before the expiration of three months from the date of mailing of Form PCT/ISA/220 or before the expiration of 22 months from the priority date, whichever expires later.

For further options, see Form PCT/ISA/220.

3. For further details, see notes to Form PCT/ISA/220.

Name and mailing address of the ISA:



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Authorized Officer

Helpiö, T.

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WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY

10/587627
AP20 Rec'd PCT/PTO 28 JUL 2006
International application No.
PCT/EP2004/053688

Box No. I Basis of the opinion

1. With regard to the **language**, this opinion has been established on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.
☐ This opinion has been established on the basis of a translation from the original language into the following language, which is the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rules 12.3 and 23.1(b)).
2. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application and necessary to the claimed invention, this opinion has been established on the basis of:
 - a. type of material:
☐ a sequence listing
☐ table(s) related to the sequence listing
 - b. format of material:
☐ in written format
☐ in computer readable form
 - c. time of filing/furnishing:
☐ contained in the international application as filed.
☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority for the purposes of search.
3. ☐ In addition, in the case that more than one version or copy of a sequence listing and/or table relating thereto has been filed or furnished, the required statements that the information in the subsequent or additional copies is identical to that in the application as filed or does not go beyond the application as filed, as appropriate, were furnished.
4. Additional comments:

Box No. II Priority

1. ☒ The validity of the priority claim has not been considered because the International Searching Authority does not have in its possession a copy of the earlier application whose priority has been claimed or, where required, a translation of that earlier application. This opinion has nevertheless been established on the assumption that the relevant date (Rules 43bis.1 and 64.1) is the claimed priority date.
2. ☐ This opinion has been established as if no priority had been claimed due to the fact that the priority claim has been found invalid (Rules 43bis.1 and 64.1). Thus for the purposes of this opinion, the international filing date indicated above is considered to be the relevant date.
3. Additional observations, if necessary:

**WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING AUTHORITY**

International application No.
PCT/EP2004/053688

Box No. IV Lack of unity of invention

1. ☒ In response to the invitation (Form PCT/ISA/206) to pay additional fees, the applicant has:
- ☒ paid additional fees.
 - ☐ paid additional fees under protest.
 - ☐ not paid additional fees.
2. ☐ This Authority found that the requirement of unity of invention is not complied with and chose not to invite the applicant to pay additional fees.
3. This Authority considers that the requirement of unity of invention in accordance with Rule 13.1, 13.2 and 13.3 is
- ☐ complied with
 - ☒ not complied with for the following reasons:
see separate sheet
4. Consequently, this report has been established in respect of the following parts of the international application:
- ☒ all parts.
 - ☐ the parts relating to claims Nos.

Box No. V Reasoned statement under Rule 43bis.1(a)(i) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes: Claims	1-84, 130-144
	No: Claims	85,88,95,97-99,110,113,115-117,123-125,129,145
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims	1-84, 130-144
	No: Claims	86, 87,89- 94,96,100-109,111,112,114,118-122,126-128,146-153
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims	1-153
	No: Claims	

2. Citations and explanations

see separate sheet

Box No. VII Certain defects in the international application

The following defects in the form or contents of the international application have been noted:

see separate sheet

Box No. VIII Certain observations on the international application

The following observations on the clarity of the claims, description, and drawings or on the question whether the claims are fully supported by the description, are made:

see separate sheet

**WRITTEN OPINION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SEARCHING
AUTHORITY (SEPARATE SHEET)**

PCT/EP2004/053688

Re Item IV

Lack of unity of invention

This Authority considers that there are two (2) inventions covered by the claims indicated as follows:

I: Claims 1-84 and 130-144

Pressing arrangements and methods employing a permeable belt having a tension of at least approximately 30 kN/m, a first side having an open area of at least approximately 25 % and a contact area of at least approximately 10 %.

II: Claims 85-129 and 145-153

A pressing arrangement and pressing methods wherein air is moved through a paper web disposed between two fabrics.

The reasons for which these inventions are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept, as required by Rule 13.1 PCT, are presented in the "invitation to pay additional fees" (Form PCT/ISA/206).

Re Item V

**Reasoned statement with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability;
citations and explanations supporting such statement**

- 1 Reference is made to the following documents:
- D1: DE 199 46 979 A1 (VOITH PAPER PATENT GMBH) 5 April 2001 (2001-04-05)
 - D2: DE 198 45 954 A1 (VOITH SULZER PAPIERTECHNIK PATENT GMBH) 13 April 2000 (2000-04-13)
 - D3: WO 03/062528 A (VOITH PAPER PATENT GMBH; HERMAN, JEFFREY; BECK, DAVID, A; SCHERB, THOM) 31 July 2003 (2003-07-31)
 - D4: DE 37 28 124 A1 (SULZER-ESCHER WYSS GMBH; SULZER-ESCHER WYSS GMBH, 7980 RAVENSBURG, DE) 2 March 1989 (1989-03-02)
 - D5: US 2003/056925 A1 (BECK DAVID A) 27 March 2003 (2003-03-27)

D6: US-B1-6 514 382 (KAKIUCHI SHUSUKE ET AL) 4 February 2003 (2003-02-04)

2 Claims 1-84 and 130-144

2.1 The document D1 is regarded as being the closest prior art to the subject-matter of claim 1, and discloses:

"A belt press for a paper machine, the belt press comprising: a roll (1) comprising an exterior surface (13); a permeable belt (5) comprising a first side and being guided over a portion of said exterior surface (13) of said roll (1)".

The subject-matter of claim 1 therefore differs from this known belt press in

"said permeable belt having a tension of at least approximately 30 kN/m; said first side having an open area of at least approximately 25 % and a contact area of at least approximately 10 %, preferably a contact area of at least 25 %".

The problem to be solved by the present invention may therefore be regarded as providing an improved belt press allowing a more efficient dewatering of a fibrous web.

There is no indication in D1, or in any other available prior art document (cf. especially D2 and D3), which would lead the skilled person, in order to solve the above problem, to modify and/or combine their teachings and thereby arrive to the subject-matter of claim 1. Therefore, claim 1 appears to satisfy the requirements of Article 33 PCT with regard to novelty and inventive step.

2.2 The same reasoning applies, mutatis mutandis, to the subject-matter of the corresponding independent claims 33, 34, 58, 71, 81 and 130, which therefore are also considered new and inventive.

2.3 Dependent claims 2-32, 35-57, 59-70, 72-80, 82-84 and 131-144 add further features to the independent claims and as such they also meet the requirements of the PCT

with respect to novelty and inventive step.

3 Claims 85-129 and 145-153

3.1 The document D1 discloses (cf. especially Fig. 1) the subject-matter of claim 85:

"A pressing arrangement comprising: at least one first fabric (3); at least one second fabric (2); the at least one first fabric (3) and the at least one second fabric (2) being permeable; a paper web (4) disposed between the first (3) and second (2) fabrics; a pressure producing element (5) being in contact with the at least one first fabric (3); a support surface (13) of a supporting structure (1) being in contact with the at least one second fabric (2); and a differential pressure being provided between the first fabric (3) and the support surface (13) and acting on the at least one first fabric (3), the paper web (4), and the at least one second fabric (2), whereby the paper web (4) is subjected to mechanical pressure and experiences a predetermined hydraulic pressure so as to cause water to be drained from the paper web (4); wherein the pressing arrangement is structured and arranged to allow air to flow in a direction from the at least one first fabric (3), through the paper web (4), through the at least one second fabric (2)".

3.2 The subject-matter of claim 85 is also known from documents D4 and D5 (cf. international search report).

3.3 As a consequence, the present application does not meet the requirements of Article 33 PCT, because the subject-matter of claim 85 is not new in the sense of Article 33(2) PCT.

3.4 The same reasoning applies, mutatis mutandis, to the subject-matter of the corresponding independent claims 129 and 145, which therefore are also considered not new.

3.5 Dependent claims 86-128 and 146-153 do not contain any additional features which, in combination with the features of any claim to which they refer, meet the

requirements of the PCT with respect to novelty or inventive step. Their additional subject-matter merely relates to optional features, which are well known from documents D1-D6 (cf. international search report) and/or which come within the scope of normal design procedures and which would therefore be applied by the skilled person in view of the technical problem to be solved without the exercise of inventive skill.

Re Item VII

Certain defects in the international application

- 4 Contrary to the requirements of Rule 5.1(a)(ii) PCT, the relevant background art disclosed especially in the documents D1, D4 and D5 is not mentioned in the description, nor are these documents identified therein.
- 5 Independent claims are not in the two-part form in accordance with Rule 6.3(b) PCT, which in the present case would be appropriate, with those features known in combination from the prior art being placed in the preamble (Rule 6.3(b)(i) PCT) and with the remaining features being included in the characterising part (Rule 6.3(b)(ii) PCT).
- 6 The features of the claims are not provided with reference signs placed in parentheses (Rule 6.2(b) PCT).

Re Item VIII

Certain observations on the international application

- 7 The present application contains 153 claims, of which 10 are independent. There is no clear distinction between the independent claims because of overlapping scope. There are so many claims, and they are drafted in such a way that the claims as a whole are not in compliance with the provisions of clarity and conciseness of Article 6 PCT, as it is particularly burdensome for a skilled person to establish the subject-matter for which protection is sought.
